



The Permanent Mission of Egypt  
to the United Nations  
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN GROUP ON  
“STATUS OF THE PROTOCOLS ADDITIONAL TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS  
OF 1949 AND RELATING TO THE PROTECTION  
OF VICTIMS OF ARMED CONFLICTS”  
AGENDA ITEM 80 - 22 OCTOBER 2012**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group on the “Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of Armed Conflicts”.

Allow me, at the outset to express the African Group gratitude to the Secretary General for his report A/67/182.

**Mr. Chairman,**

All African Member States have ratified the four Geneva Conventions, while of the two 1977 Additional Protocols, Protocol I had been ratified by 51, and Protocol II by 50. Protocol III had been ratified by 1 African member State.

However, this manifestation of respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) by states parties does not give a complete picture of reality, since armed groups were involved in most of armed conflicts on the African continent.

In Africa, conflicts are the driving cause behind displacement. The situation in this part of the world is characterized by severe child malnutrition, loss of livestock and livelihoods, as well as ongoing displacement owing to continued clashes between opponent parties in affected areas. Africa hosts almost half of those who are displaced by violence in the world, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). In this respect, the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa - known as the Kampala Convention - is a comprehensive document that will constitute an important contribution to international humanitarian law, when it comes into force. The African Group looks forward to the early completion of the ratification phase of the Convention as to ensure its effective implementation and efficiently address issues of displacement in Africa.

As conflicts of diverse natures continue to bring about a high death toll on our continent, the African Group reaffirms its strong support to International Humanitarian Law, of which the additional protocols under our consideration are fundamental landmarks.

It is the view of the African Group that these additional protocols are henceforth major international legal instruments containing mostly international customary rules which make them, thus, applicable to all armed conflicts and to all parties.

As irreplaceable instruments for the protection of human dignity during armed conflicts, the additional protocols fulfill a highly important function with regards to the conduct of hostilities and to the behavior of the protagonists.

That is why the African Group is of the view that, given the diverse nature of conflicts which the international community is presently witnessing, respect for International Humanitarian Law during such conflicts, and in particular respect for the additional protocols, is an obligation that shall not be confined to States only but should be observed by all parties to conflicts.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The African Group is delighted to notice the universal adherence to the Geneva Conventions and the continuing strengthening of International Humanitarian Law through the increasing ratifications of the additional protocols. Such considerable progress is very significant of the international community's increasing interest in the protection of victims during armed conflicts.

We commend the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the promotion and the dissemination of International Humanitarian Law in general and in particular, its work for a better understanding of and compliance to international humanitarian law and we encourage it to continue its efforts in this respect. We also welcome the convening of the thirty-first International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December 2011, and commend ICRC, as well as the broader International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, for adopting in 2011 an appeal to all Governments to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again. We also encourage ICRC to further integrate sustainable development into its humanitarian work and continue its efforts in the implementation of the "Sustainable Development Framework" elaborated in November 2011.

**Finally Mr. Chairman,**

We believe that Member States remain the crucial players for promoting and complying with International Humanitarian Law and we take this opportunity to invite them to intensify their awareness-raising and training efforts with a view to promote a large dissemination of International Humanitarian Law, and particularly the additional protocols of the Geneva conventions.

**I thank you.**